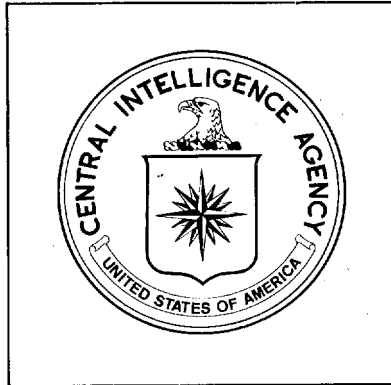


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Latin American Trends

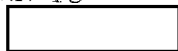
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LATIN AMERICAN TRENDS



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Venezuela: Labor Congress

The wildcat strike last month that temporarily closed down the country's recently nationalized iron-ore mines may play an unexpected role in the political battle now shaping up for leadership of Venezuela's principal labor central--the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV).

The CTV has scheduled its seventh congress from April 28 to May 1. These triennial congresses are the supreme authority for the 1.6 million members--about 50 percent of the work force. The delegates will elect a new executive council to serve for three years. The governing Democratic Action Party expects to have a majority of the delegates and thus the battle will take place in the party caucus prior to the congress.

Most attention centers on the contest for the presidency, a vacancy caused by the death in December of Francisco Olivio. The aging labor leadership is being challenged by a new generation that has become active since the overthrow of the Perez Jimenez dictatorship in 1958. Although the younger leaders are showing more aggressiveness and vigor than they have in the past, the old guard is generally favored to put over its choice of Jose Vargas for the post. Vargas is the CTV's international secretary and has the backing of most elders in the labor movement. His 37-year-old opponent, Carlos Luna, admits he faces an uphill fight in trying to depose men who have enjoyed thirty years of leadership.

This time, however, President Carlos Andres Perez may intervene in the party caucus. Perez may be blaming the labor leaders for the way they mishandled the strike of iron ore workers, which threatened not only to disrupt iron-ore exports but also to force a temporary

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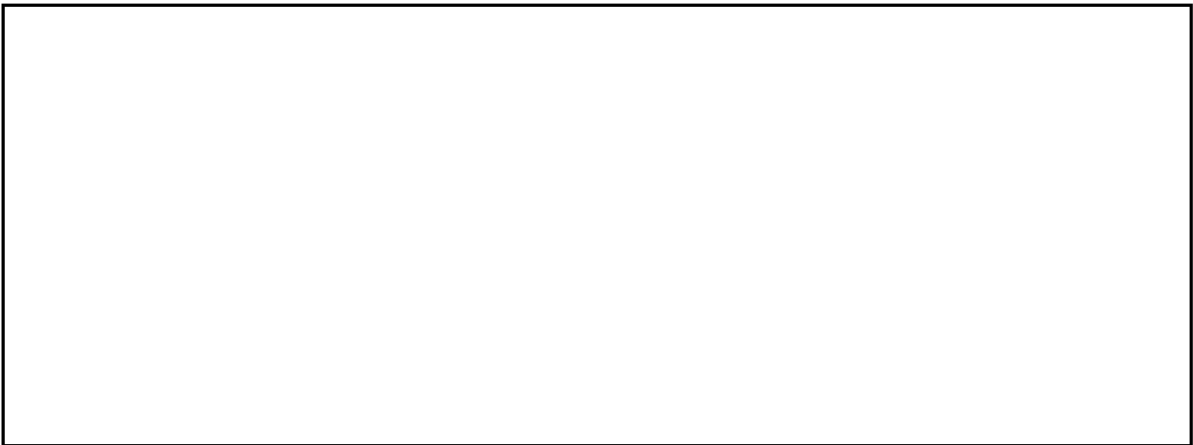
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Venezuela: Can COPEI Put It Together

Over fourteen months since the last general election, the opposition Social Christian Party (COPEI) is trying to pick up the pieces following the stunning defeat administered by President Perez and the Democratic Action Party.

The COPEI party organization is in shambles and party leaders have been unable to mount any consistent opposition to President Perez' policies. Although blamed in part for the party's debacle, former President Caldera has assumed active leadership of the party and is attempting to restructure its organization before the next election campaign starts in earnest a year from now. Caldera's motives have been questioned in some party quarters as an attempt to dictate the nominee. Neither he nor Perez will be constitutionally eligible to run again in 1978. The bitter recriminations that enveloped the party after the last election still persist in some quarters, although there appears now to be a general awareness of the fact that the party will have to pull itself together if it is to have a crack at the presidency.



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shutdown of the government-owned steel industry. The strike came at a particularly inappropriate time for Perez, since the nationalization of the iron mining industry is regarded as a pilot project for the petroleum nationalization scheduled to take place later in the year. Questions are already being raised regarding the government's ability to manage such enterprises.

The inability of the CTV leaders to head off the strike and control the workers is being attributed not only to their lack of credibility but also to their poor communications with the workers. It is a lesson that probably has not been lost on the President. Perez is known not to suffer fools willingly and may reach the conclusion that a new team at the top of the labor organization will prevent similar embarrassing occurrences in the petroleum industry. For these reasons, he may decide to take an active role in the party caucus and dictate the choice of CTV president, favoring perhaps the younger labor leaders such as Luna.

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Argentina: Leftist Electoral Aspirations

The badly splintered left wing of the Peronist movement may be trying to pump new life into its sagging image by forming a political coalition to represent it at the polls.

According to the authoritative El Cronista Commercial, the Peronist left is planning to launch a new "Partido Descamisado" (named after Peron's "shirtless ones"), and former president Hector Campora is being touted as the likely 1977 presidential contender. Campora has been in virtual political exile in Mexico since he resigned as ambassador to that country the week Peron died.

The trade journal claims that the new party will be inaugurated on March 11, the second anniversary of Campora's landslide victory. Then it reportedly would test the political waters in the Misiones provincial elections scheduled for April 13. The federal government is likely to have a firm grasp over the electoral machinery, however, and Orthodox Peronists can be expected to gain the upper hand.

The new party reportedly will be composed of dissident Peronist political groups and the radically-oriented Peronist Youth. The latter organization, which suffers from serious internal divisions, has taken a battering in the universities, its principal stronghold, as a result of the government's harsh crackdown on the left. Once beaten on its own turf, the left wing found itself with no real avenue of influence. This became all the more evident when most leftist-oriented newspapers and periodicals were shut down by official edict.

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It is unlikely that the Copeyanos will be able to offer any substantial opposition to the Democratic Action Party at least until they have gotten their own house in order. In the meantime, Perez is riding the crest of popular approval, dominating the political scene, and implementing his "democracia con energia" program which, in the opinion of one official observer, is becoming more energy and less democracy.

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Ecuador: Primer on Fishing Laws

The following abstract of Ecuadorean fishing regulations has been compiled for ready-reference use. In no way does it represent official US Government interpretation of the finer points of Ecuadorean law. Ecuador publishes fees and calculates fines in sucres. On January 30, 1975, there were 24.941 sucres to the US dollar.

Jurisdiction. Ecuadorean territorial seas are claimed from shore to a line 200 miles from shore, including an irregular circle 400 miles in diameter centered on the Galapagos Islands, which are situated approximately 700 miles at sea. Fishing by foreign-flag vessels is prohibited within the inner 40 miles of the claimed territorial sea. From 40 to 200 miles, foreign-flag vessels of up to 600 net registered tons may fish if properly registered and licensed. Larger vessels are prohibited as a conservation measure.

Documentation. In the above context, fishing vessels must possess a matricula (registration certificate) and a license. The matricula is valid for one calendar year, and the license for one fishing voyage. Because the tuna season usually runs from November until April, it requires two matriculas to register a vessel for one season. However, for a returning vessel, the second matricula remains valid for the first part of the subsequent season.

For licensing purposes, a voyage begins when the vessel leaves its port of origin and ends when it arrives at any port with the intention of disposing of its cargo in whole or in part. In addition, the license has a specified lifetime, measured in days

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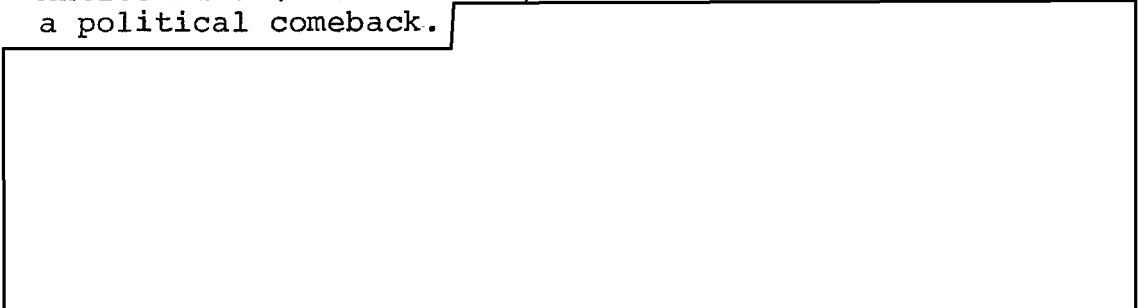
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The rightward tilt of Mrs. Peron's administration has been largely responsible for driving the left wing of her party to the sidelines. Provincial governments headed by leftist Peronists were deposed one by one and intervened by federal authorities. In addition, large numbers of Argentines with leftist sympathies were forced to flee the country because of threats from quasi-official death squads.

Given the current murky political climate, the prospect for the new party does not appear auspicious. Although ousted Peronist leaders such as Campora and the deposed governor of Cordoba Province, Obregon Cano, are being mentioned as party leaders, the fear of assassination at the hands of the rightist Argentine Anticommunist Alliance may deter them from trying for a political comeback.



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from departure from port of origin, which can cause it to expire before the end of a voyage. This period varies according to the following schedule: 90 days for licenses obtained at Ecuadorean consulates in Europe and Asia, 60 days for those obtained in North America, and 50 days for those obtained in Central and South America. Included in the last category are licenses obtained by ship-to-shore radio from the Directorate General of Fisheries in Guayaquil. Matriculas may also be obtained by radio.

Fees. At present the matricula costs 17,500 sucres. The fee for licensing is varied (infrequently) so as to approximate 10 percent of the average value of the catch at Ecuadorean, North American, European, and Asian ports. This average is generally slightly higher than the value of the catch at San Diego, California. Current license fees are 1,500 sucres per net registered ton.

Penalties. An undocumented fishing vessel discovered within the zone between 40 and 200 miles from shore is presumed to be fishing at that position, even if drifting at the time of capture. Moreover, the total catch on board is presumed to have been caught illegally. Such a vessel must pay a fine equivalent to double the fee it would have paid for a license, and must relinquish its total catch to a storage facility designated by Ecuadorean authorities. Confiscation of the catch is mandatory. In addition, if the vessel is qualified for licensing (i.e., is under 600 net registered tons) it must purchase a license and a matricula at their normal cost.

Repeat offenders are subject to geometrically increasing penalties. A repeat offender is any vessel that has been fined previously in the same or any

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prior season, whether or not commanded by the same captain. For the second offense, the fine shall be four times the license fee; for the third offense, eight times; for the fourth offense, sixteen times; and so on. In all cases the total catch will be confiscated and, if the vessel qualifies, the license and matricula must also be purchased at their normal cost. Some Ecuadorean officials have indicated that the law on repeat offenders may be interpreted to require no more than a doubling of the initial fine for each subsequent offense.

If violence attends inspection or arrest, whichever of the above penalties that applies may be increased by one-third. Regarding repeat offenders, Ecuadorean law is silent on the case of a vessel fined one or more times under one owner and subsequently fined under another owner.

Penalties may be appealed to the Directorate General of Fisheries within 72 hours of their being imposed. The vessel's captain, its owner, and the latter's local representative are designated as jointly responsible for the payment of penalties.



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Brazil: Communist Party Optimism

Some members of the Communist Party reportedly feel their organization has been strengthened by last November's elections. They claim, for example, that three party members were elected to congress and five others to state assemblies. Moreover, a number of other candidates not in the party but supported by it gained office. Party leaders also say that the group's membership has grown in recent months, as its activity in support of favored candidates has increased.

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These expressions of optimism must be viewed against the background of long-term government repression and lackluster leadership, which have long since rendered the Communist party inconsequential. Moreover, government vigilance against it has increased since the opposition electoral victory. Nonetheless, the dissatisfaction that led to the opposition's gains--stemming largely from economic hardship--could encourage the Communists to make a renewed bid to widen their support. At the very least, party leaders have clearly perceived the need to renovate their leadership, a process that may well be under way already.

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Nicaraguan President Raises Specter of Cuban
Subversion

A dramatic act of terrorism last December has rekindled President Somoza's longstanding antagonism toward Castro. Forced to yield to the terrorists' demands, including a flight to Cuba, Somoza has launched a concerted campaign charging the Castro regime with complicity in the affair. There is no evidence to substantiate this, however.

Somoza's family-owned newspapers and networks have been denouncing Cuban involvement in Nicaraguan internal affairs. The opposition press, still under the strict censorship imposed during the attack by members of the Sandinist Liberation Front, has reported Somoza's intentions of raising the issue in the OAS. The Nicaraguan Ambassador to the UN has circulated to all missions a letter charging the Cuban Government with complicity in the terrorist attack. Also, Nicaragua has called for a meeting of the Central American Defense Board in hope of gaining support for its charges of Cuban subversion.

Somoza's reaction is partly due to the fact that the Sandinists left him shocked, angered, and embarrassed. He is proud of his country's record--under his tenure--of relative tranquility. For the benefit of foreign observers, and his own peace of mind, it is easier to blame the Cubans than to acknowledge a home-grown conspiracy. Also, Somoza still perceives Cuba as a threat to the hemisphere.

The Sandinists did receive some Cuban funds and guerrilla training in the early 1960s when they began sporadic acts of violence. However, speculation of Cuban involvement in the event last December appears

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unfounded, despite such claims by Somoza. The President supports his charges of Cuban complicity by stating that the Cubans gave the Sandinists a heroes' welcome, arranged a special press conference for them, and concealed their identities.

At the time, the Cubans were involved in the final stages of negotiations to re-establish diplomatic ties with Venezuela. During the same week, Havana was host to a Mexican delegation headed by Mrs. Echeverria, and to a large group of Costa Rican officials. Thus the Castro regime was probably more embarrassed by the whole affair than pleased by its potential propaganda value.

For example, coverage of the arrival of the Sandinists in Havana on December 30 consisted of only three sentences in the lower left-hand corner of the December 31 issue of the Cuban daily Granma, and only one sentence in the January 3 issue of the Cuban weekly Bohemia. Both items were careful to state that Cuba agreed to receive the FSLN members in response to the official request of the Nicaraguan government.

Three days after their arrival in Havana, the Sandinists were permitted to meet the press. The thrust of the conference was such that it seems likely that the Cubans allowed it only because the Sandinists expressed the fear that the National Guard would retaliate by threatening their families. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] As a followup to the conference, the January 3 issue of Granma gave it a third of page number five and the January 10 issue of Bohemia gave it four pages in its World News section, pages 70 through 73. By mid-January, the event had been twice mentioned in passing by Granma, and neither periodical has bothered to do a feature item on the subject. [REDACTED]

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Cuba: Authors Beware

The Cuban literary world, in celebrating the 70th birthday of one of its leading lights, was subtly reminded of its political limitations by a member of the party's Central Committee.

Juan Marinello, whose combination of literary prestige and political malleability earned him a long term as president of the pre-Castro Communist Party, spoke at a ceremony on December 26, 1974, in Havana organized by the Central Committee to honor internationally respected Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier. Marinello, in lauding Carpentier, warned that the realities of world politics "cannot be separated from the precious activity of our literary creators without our demanding from them a clearly defined stirring and militant attitude." More specifically, he objected "to certain storytellers of the new wave of illegal imitation based on minor virtue and soliloquies of an ephemeral existence which are the product of diversionist ideas."

Although he claimed that the Cuban Revolution "does not impose either strict formulas or thematic norms" and that the Revolution's "law is the law of respect for the intelligence of every creator," he frankly acknowledged the regime's interference in artistic freedom. He justified this interference by saying: "when we raise a wall between us and the intelligence that serves the enemy, we do so in defense of the very freedom of creation, for there is more than ample proof of the fact that wherever the imperialists and their accomplices are victorious and govern,...art, that noble and progressive category, falls and disappears along with human dignity."

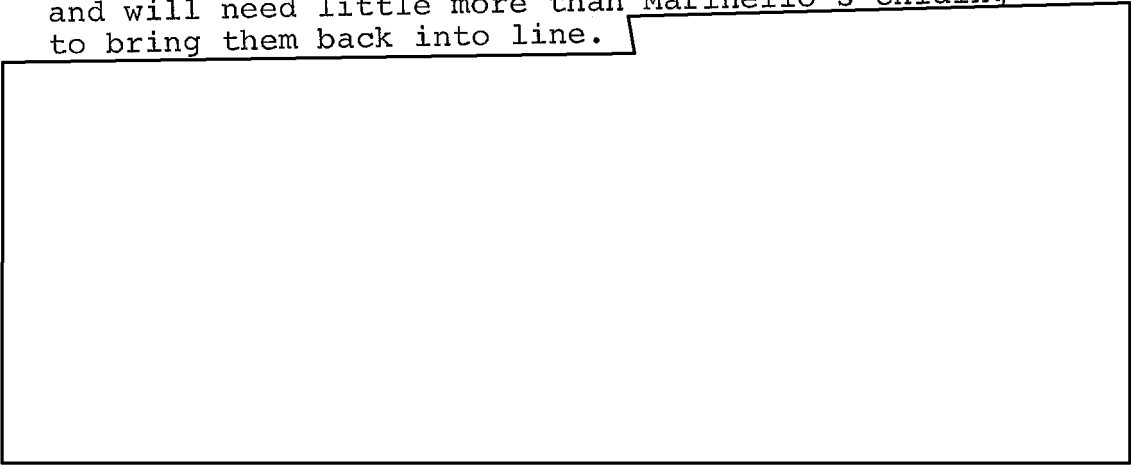
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Marinello's remarks probably do not presage any new moves by the regime to cow Cuban intellectuals. The experience of poet Heberto Padilla in 1971 presumably is still fresh in their minds. There may be some who have inadvertently strayed outside party guidelines but they are few in number and will need little more than Marinello's chiding to bring them back into line.



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Dominican Republic: The Ghost of Trujillo

25X1 Leonidas Rhadames Trujillo, the only surviving son of El Benefactor, is trying to capitalize on his father's legacy.

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25X1 The 35-year-old Rhadames' political career is not likely to get off the ground. His primary defect is his own inexperience and incompetence. Although his father had very little formal education, he was far from unintelligent. Perhaps the major key to Trujillo's 31-year grip on the Dominican Republic was that he worked harder and longer than any of his opponents, competitors, or subordinates. He was also an excellent organizer and administrator, at least until near the end of his rule in 1961. He was particularly astute at manipulating the strengths and weaknesses of his opponents. Most of these qualities were not inherited by his son Rhadames, but they were passed on to his political heir, President Joaquin Balaguer. Balaguer is the main obstacle to any revival of the Trujillo dynasty.

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There are also many Dominicans who remember that Trujillo ruled as a tyrant. While the majority of

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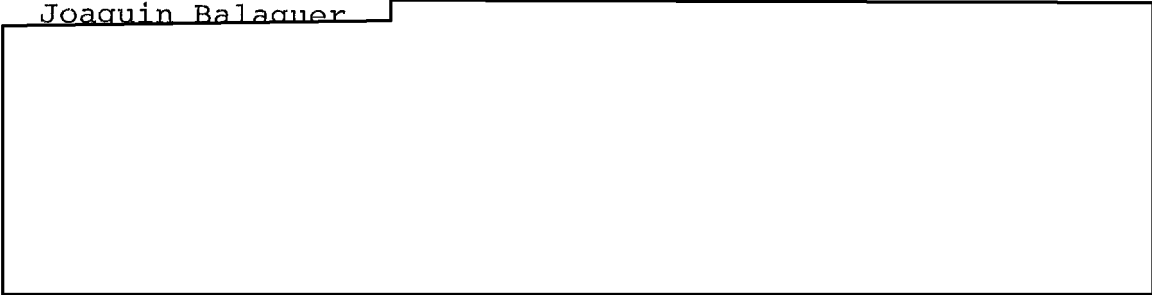
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people did not suffer under his regime, and a fair number prospered, there were many thousands that saw the inside of Dominican prisons, some never to leave. These political enemies of Trujillo are constantly on the lookout for any sign of a resurgence of Trujillismo. Recently, for example, the government banned the sale of recordings of the dictator's favorite songs that had appeared on the market.

Another factor working against Rhadames is that there are rivals who would dispute any claim to leadership of the conservative groups at which his appeal is directed. Exiled General Elias Wessin y Wessin probably is at the top of the list. Like the President's other opponents on all sides of the political spectrum, for the present Rhadames can only sit on the sidelines watching the performance of the man who has been called a "benevolent Trujillo"--
Joaquin Balaguer



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